

MEMORANDUM

April 17, 1957

To: Mr. Harold A. Lett

From: John P. Milligan

Subject: Your Memorandum of April 15 Regarding Hospital Admissions Forms Inquiry

First, let me say that I am certainly glad to have any guidance you can give on the subject of hospital admissions forms or any other. I believe I have referred every letter to you for your reaction before answering.

Secondly, you have said yourself that we have no jurisdiction over what hospitals keep in terms of a post-admission record.

Thirdly, the distinction between race and color, as you point out, is really an academic question. The important matter here is whether either of these terms is used to discriminate.

Fourth, so far as I know, I have at no time given any indication that we will condone the use of either the term "race" or "color" in a pre-admissions blank; for example, in the letter to Mr. Edwin Snyder of the Orange Memorial Hospital, April 8, I said ". . . We are not saying here that this (meaning "race") cannot be used since this is a post-admissions blank. We feel the hospital will have to determine for itself what information it needs. . . ." Later in this letter, after explaining our objection to the use of the termination "race", I said ". . . On the other hand, as a post-admission record for purposes of identification, the word "color" is a descriptive term. . . .".

In another letter to Dr. L. Ashby Adams of the Princeton Hospital, I said ". . . We cannot condone any pre-admission information which is in violation of the Law. . . .".

In the light of what I have said, I do not see how we could be placed in any embarrassing position. If I am incorrect, please advise me.